DC

1

DAWN OF DC

BATMAN™/CATWOMAN™ THE GOTHAM WAR

BATTLE LINES

ZDARSKY
HOWARD
HAWTHORNE
DI BENEDETTO
FAJARDO JR.

Jorge Jimenez 2023

13+
TEEN

IT'S BAT VS. CAT!

A CITY-SPANNING CONFLICT THAT WILL CRACK THE BAT-FAMILY IN HALF!

BATMAN/CATWOMAN THE GOTHAM WAR

© & ™ DC.

THE TWO-MONTH BATTLE BEGINS IN AUGUST WITH *BATMAN/CATWOMAN: THE GOTHAM WAR: BATTLE LINES* #1

Written by
CHIP ZDARSKY
TINI HOWARD
MATTHEW ROSENBERG

Art by
MIKE HAWTHORNE
ADRIANO DI BENEDETTO
JORGE JIMENEZ
NICO LEON
NIKOLA ČIŽMEŠIJA

I'm sick of it. I'm--

I can take the ***pain.*** The ***abuse.***

But it's not fair to ***her.*** She ***worries*** and--

DAD? I JUST PUT ***DINNER*** ON, YOU WANT--

NAH, HONEY. GONNA-- GONNA HIT THE ***SACK...***

Riddler. Freeze. ***Pyg.***

They're all the ***same.*** No matter ***who*** you work for.

All $%#@ ***promises,*** but then barely share the wealth.

And then they...

mew

KRCH KRCH

mew

HEY, BUDDY... IT'S ALL RIGHT.

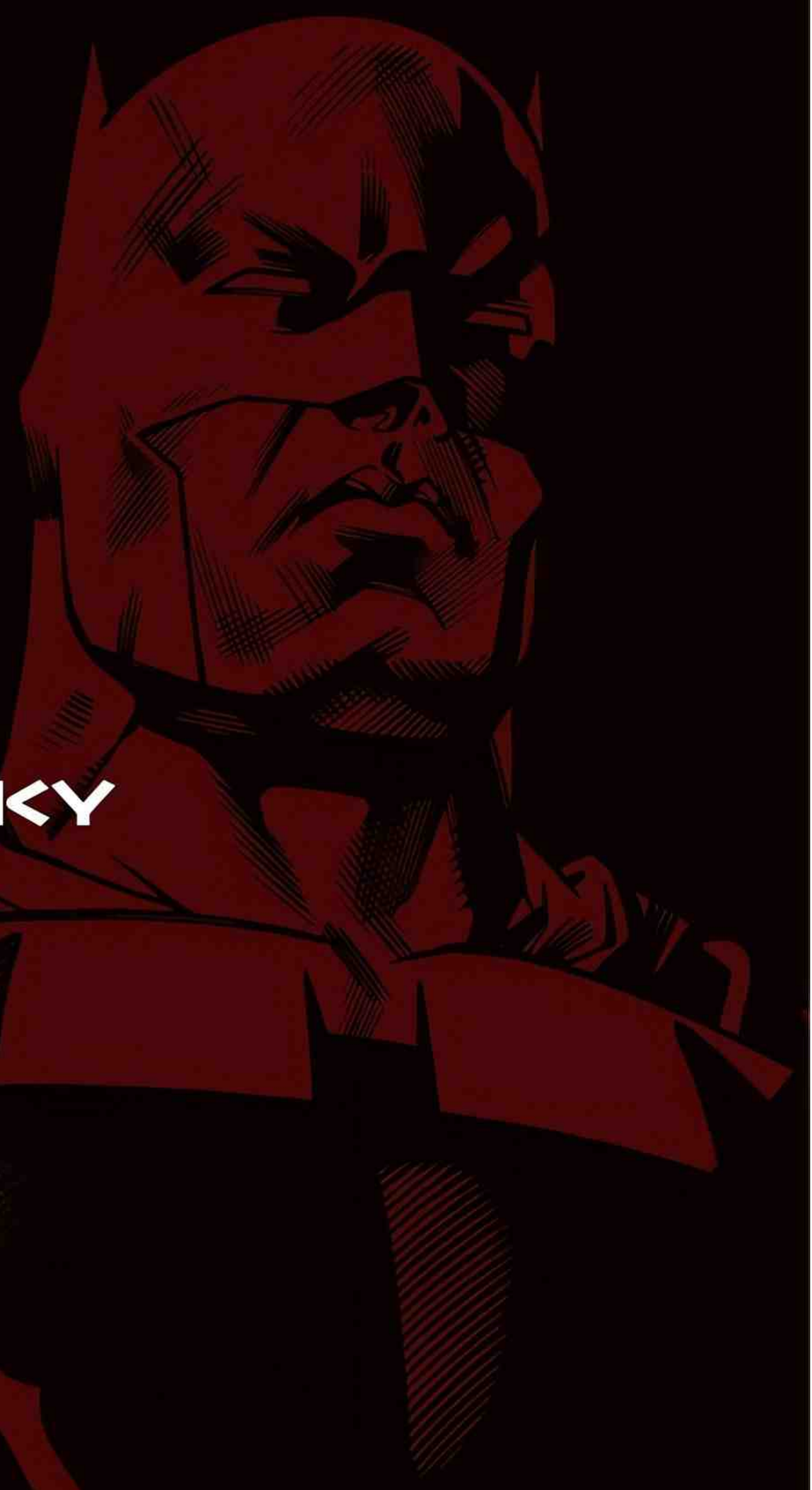
NOBODY'S GOING TO HURT YOU...

WHADDAYA GOT THERE, PAL...

If you risk your life...
you deserve the rewards.

228 Marie Ave.
Alleytown.

BATMAN/CATWOMAN
THE GOTHAM WAR
BATTLE LINES



WRITTEN BY
TINI HOWARD & CHIP ZDARSKY

PENCILS BY
MIKE HAWTHORNE

INKS BY
ADRIANO DI BENEDETTO

COLORS BY
ROMULO FAJARDO JR.

EDITORS
BEN ABERNATHY
& JESSICA CHEN

COVER BY
JORGE JIMENEZ

VARIANT COVERS BY
JOE QUESADA, KEVIN NOWLAN
& RICHARD ISANOVE
KAEL NGU

1:25 VARIANT COVER BY
OTTO SCHMIDT

1:50 VARIANT COVER BY
KAEL NGU

1:100 VARIANT COVER BY
JOE QUESADA & KEVIN NOWLAN

FOIL VARIANT COVER BY
JONBOY MEYERS

BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE WITH BILL FINGER

SUPERMAN CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER
BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE JERRY SIEGEL FAMILY

Failsafe. Red Mask. I haven't stopped in weeks.

And then the creature ***Insomnia*** hit with their ***Knightmare League.***

Bringing ***horrific dreams*** to life.

We stopped them. We always do.

But the toll. This ***relentless*** life.

It's catching up to me.

So I sleep.

So **deeply.** It feels **good.** So...

SO SOUND.

Zur-En-Arrh...you shouldn't be here. You're--

HN. LOCKED AWAY, OF COURSE.

I'M JUST YOUR **BACKUP PERSONALITY.** A **PURE BATMAN.**

BREAK IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES.

A mistake. I should **expunge** you. I should--

EXPUNGE? BUT WHAT IF YOUR **MIND** GETS **HIJACKED?**

WE PREPARED FOR **EVERYTHING.** I...

I AM YOUR PREPARATION.

Wait. Something's **there.** Who--

HN. YOU'RE **PARANOID.** I'M EVIDENCE OF THAT.

REST UP, **BRUCE. GOTHAM NEEDS YOU.**

THEY NEED **BATMAN.**

Everyone needs me. It's too much, it's--

Okay. In the ***Batacombs.***

How long was I put to sleep for? Is everyone else okay?

Someone's been keeping me ***shaved,*** tending to me, so that's a good sign...

BRUCE! MY **GOD...**

HNN... ORACLE...HOW LONG WAS I ***OUT?***

IT'S BEEN **EIGHT WEEKS!**

DID THIS HAPPEN TO ANYONE ELSE? ***SUPERMAN? WONDER WOMAN?***

JUST YOU, THANK ***GOD.*** YOU PASSED OUT AFTER THE ENCOUNTER WITH ***INSOMNIA.*** WE THINK IT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH YOUR POSSESSION BY ***DEADMAN.***

WE BROUGHT IN ***LESLIE*** AND SOME ***SPECIALISTS--*** COVERTLY--AND THEY ALL SAID THE SAME THING...

...YOU WERE **FINE.** JUST... ASLEEP.

WELL, "FINE," EXCEPT FOR WHAT LESLIE AND I DISCOVERED...

BRUCE... YOUR **HAND.** WHAT HAP--

AN ***ACCIDENT.*** IT'S FINE, ORACLE.

LET'S TALK LATER SO YOU CAN CATCH ME UP.

What happened?

Time happened. Age happened.

Nothing feels right. Nothing...

...except ***this.***

I'll stop, take stock, reach out...

...tomorrow. For now I just need to be ***myself.***

The air. The stretching of a body that can still ***do*** this, for now.

I shouldn't have kept my ***hand*** a secret from the rest.

...before the ***world*** finds out I'm ***human.*** That the years are catching up to me.

Hn. Until then...

But I feel... ***defensive*** lately.

Like I need to ***maintain*** the ***illusion*** of Batman...

...let's ***remind*** the world who I ***am.***

YOU SURE YOU DISABLED THE *ALARM?*

I *TOLD* YOU I DID!

WE'RE DOING IT ALL BY THE *BOOK!*

I GUESS... BUT I DON'T THINK SHE'LL BE *HAPPY* WITH HOW BIG A TARGET WE'VE HIT...

WE'RE *OVERACHIEVERS,* YOU AND ME, MAN. YOU GOT *EYES* ON THINGS?

YEAH, AIN'T NO ONE--

--SNEAKIN'... UP...

MARCUS TOLLIVER...

RUN! IT'S HIM!

#$@%!

...STAN BEVINGTON.

A BIT OUT OF YOUR *DEPTH,* I'D SAY.

Goons for *hire.*

Hired hands who usually work for ***Freeze.*** For ***Joker.***

SAVE YOURSELF THE ***EXHAUSTION...***

...AND THE ***BRUISES.***

Unusual to send them on a ***heist.*** *Huh.*

...to get some ***exercise...***

Wasn't expecting ***that.***

A real ***chase.***

I should ***thank*** them. An opportunity...

Where'd they...

The *vents.* Gone.

Which means the *window...*

...was a *feint.*

A familiar one. A *professional* one.

Something's changed in *Gotham.*

I-I CAN *DO* IT! J-JUST GIMME ANOTHER--

ROLAND, YOU DID THIS *PERFECTLY* BACK IN TRAINING.

I-I KNOW, BUT I W-WASN'T...

...F-FIFTEEN STORIES *UP!*

THE *WEALTHY* OF *GOTHAM* LIKE TO LIVE *ABOVE* IT ALL. IT'S WHERE YOU NEED TO BECOME *COMFORTABLE...*

...IF YOU WANT TO SCORE ENOUGH TO MAKE IT *WORTH YOUR WHILE.*

I'M...I'M *SORRY.* I J-JUST NEED TO--

DON'T APOLOGIZE.

...AND STOP ACTING LIKE I'M GOING TO *HURT* YOU, ROLAND.

THOSE DAYS ARE *OVER.* YOU'RE...

...OFF THE HOOK FOR TONIGHT. WE'RE HEADED BACK TO ALLEYTOWN.

I'D SAY YOU PUNCH LIKE A ***GIRL,*** BUT YOU DON'T DESERVE THE COMPLIMENT!

HOOPS. GO ***EASY,*** OKAY?

UGH, ***FINE.*** GOT IT, BOSS.

YOU TOO, ***FULLER.***

HE ***STARTED*** IT!

CAN'T BLAME HER. SHE'S SUCH A LITTLE ***MOUSE*** SOMETIMES FOLKS KEEP DOUBTING SHE'S GOT ***POWERS.***

YOU OKAY? YOU LOOK--

CORRAL THE LADIES. MEETING IN FIVE, ***MARQUISE.*** SOMETHING'S...

"...COME UP."

WHAT'S SO *URGENT?* I WAS ABOUT TO TAKE SOME OF THE *NEWBIES* ON A *TEST RUN.*

AND WHILE *SCORPIANA* DID THAT, I WAS GOING TO *TERRIFY* THEM WITH SOME FEAR GAS.

REALLY SEE HOW THEY HANDLE *PRESSURE.*

HE'S AWAKE.

I...OH #$@%.

DO WE *SHUT DOWN?* HOW DO WE--

CALM *DOWN,* VOX. WHO *CARES?* THERE'S ONE OF HIM, *DOZENS* OF US...

AND MOST OF YOU HAVE NEVER EVEN *SEEN* HIM UP CLOSE. IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE AND YOU *KNOW* IT, HOOPS.

WHATEVER YOU'RE THINKING, HE'S THOUGHT IT *FIRST.*

I'M PUTTING *EXTERNAL* TRAINING ON *HOLD.*

NEWBIES STAY IN THE *TRAINING COMPOUND* WALLS. AND GET WORD OUT TO THE *GRADUATES* TO BE *EXTRA CAUTIOUS* OUT THERE.

REMEMBER: NO SCORE IS WORTH YOUR LIFE-- OR *ANYONE ELSE'S.*

HEY--DON'T LET IT RATTLE YOU. AT LEAST DON'T LET THEM ***SEE*** YOU RATTLED.

WE KNEW THIS WAS COMING EVER SINCE YOU BROKE US ALL OUT OF ***JAIL.***

I DIDN'T FORGET. JUST HOPED I'D HAVE A LITTLE MORE TIME.

WE'RE UP AND RUNNING AND HE CAN'T DENY THAT IT'S WORKING. HE LIKES TO ARGUE WITH ***FACTS AND LOGIC,*** THAT ONE.

GONNA SPEAK FREELY, BOSS-- AFTER WHAT YOU ***TOLD ME*** ABOUT THE TWO OF YOU...I'M NOT SO CONFIDENT YOU'RE ANY GOOD AT ***ARGUING*** WITH HIM.

MM, BUT I ***AM*** PRACTICED AT IT. LOOK, IT'S ALWAYS BEEN COMPLICATED BETWEEN US.

HE'S GOING TO HAVE ***PROBLEMS,*** BUT HE LOVES THIS DAMNED CITY SO ***MUCH...***

...HE HAS TO SEE IT'S CHANGING, BECOMING SOMETHING DIFFERENT. SOMETHING BETTER, BECAUSE OF WHAT ***WE'VE*** DONE.

AND IF HE ***CAN'T?***

THEN HE AND I ARE ***DONE*** ARGUING.

TIME TO CALL ***ANOTHER*** MEETING.

HRAH! THIS INFERNAL MACHINE!

CRONIUS! I NEED YOU TO TEAR IT ASUNDER!

WARNING ELECTRICAL HAZARD

WARNING

S-SIR, I K-KEEP TELLING YOU, I DON'T KNOW HOW!

GOTHAM DOES NOT DESERVE MY DIVINE ELECTRICITY, STREAMING SO FREELY FROM THIS ELECTRIC PLANT!

I NEED TO RECLAIM IT! MAXIE ZEUS IS--

IN GREAT NEED...

...OF SOME TIME AT ARKHAM.

RAH! MOUNT ARKHAM IS NO PLACE FOR A GOD!

NO, NO, NO, NO!

YOU'RE BETTER THAN THIS, CRAIG.

I-I'M SORRY, R-ROBIN--

FSSZZ--

DOES THE BATMAN REALLY THINK MAXIE ZEUS CAN BE DEFEATED--

--BY SOME PREENING BIRD?!

MAXIE, YOU'VE GOT NOTHING! COME ON AND JUST GIVE UP!

--I AM

NEVER!

I AM A GOD! I AM--

DONE.

THM

HNF!

MY GOD... BR--

BATMAN!

ROBIN.

LOOKED LIKE YOU DIDN'T ***NEED*** ME, BUT--

DAMMIT, ***BATMAN***--

--OF ***COURSE*** I NEED YOU...

I...IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, SON.

I'M SORRY IF I--

IT'S NOT YOUR *FAULT...*

AFTER EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED RECENTLY, WHO CAN BLAME YOU FOR PULLING A *RIP VAN WINKLE?*

I'M JUST GLAD YOU'RE *OKAY.*

DID YOU ROUND UP *MAXIE'S GOONS?*

IT WAS JUST *CRAIG GROFF,* THAT GUY WHO WORKED FOR *RIDDLER* FOR, LIKE, A WEEK.

HE'S INSIDE, BUT HARMLESS. COPS HAVE JUST ENTERED SO THEY'LL NAB HIM NO PROBLEM.

HN. NOT LIKE *MAXIE* TO GO IN *UNPREPARED.*

WHAT HAPPENED TO HIS *USUAL* "PANTHEON" OF THUGS?

I...HAVE YOU TALKED TO BARBARA SINCE YOU WOKE UP?

I DID. BUT I DISCONNECTED MY *COMMS.* NEEDED TO CLEAR MY HEAD, BEFORE--

SHE JUST ALERTED ALL OF US...

CATWOMAN WANTS TO HAVE A *TALK.* MASKS *OFF.*

GANG'S ALL HERE.

EXCEPT...

...OF COURSE.

...HE *CAN'T* JUST SHOW UP ON TIME AND MAKE IT EASY.

YEAH?

WELL, NEITHER CAN *YOU.* HOLD IT AGAINST HIM. GIVE HIM *HELL.*

GO HOME, MARQUISE. I'VE GOT IT FROM HERE.

I MEAN IT. DON'T YOU DARE GO SOFT ON ME, KYLE.

YOU'RE THE *WORLD'S GREATEST CRIMINAL.*

THE KITTY KAT CLUB.

HN. THIS PLACE IS A KNOWN HIDEOUT FOR *ORGANIZED CRIMINALS.*

WE SHOULD BE SHUTTING IT *DOWN.*

IF *CATWOMAN* IS OPERATING OUT OF THEMED BUILDINGS, THAT'S *VILLAIN BEHAVIOR* IN GOTHAM.

IS THIS MEETING ABOUT BRUCE? IS HE REALLY *AWAKE,* OR--

NO NAMES IN THE FIELD, *SPOILER.*

FATHER.

ENJOY YOUR *NAP?*

DON'T WORRY, STEPH, YOU CAN SPEAK FREELY HERE.

THE KITTY KAT CLUB IS UNDER MY PROTECTION, SAFE FROM PRYING EARS AND EYES.

I'M GLAD YOU ALL CAME. I'VE NEVER REALLY BEEN A PART OF YOUR FAMILY, BUT...I THINK YOU ALL WILL APPRECIATE WHAT I HAVE TO SAY. YOU'RE EACH ONE OF GOTHAM'S FIERCEST PROTECTORS.

AND SO AM I.

WE ALL WANT TO MAKE THINGS BETTER IN THE CITY.

IN THE WORLD.

SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED, BUT VIOLENT CRIME IS DOWN BY ALMOST 75 PERCENT.

AND THE USUAL COLORFUL CAST OF CHARACTERS HAVE BEEN SUSPICIOUSLY QUIET WHEN IT COMES TO ANYTHING OF CONSEQUENCE.

IT WOULD SEEM THE POOL OF "HIRED HELP" OF ALL THE REAL MONSTERS OUT THERE...HAS BEEN GREATLY DIMINISHED.

THERE ARE SIMPLY, FORGIVE THE WORD, NOT ENOUGH GOONS TO HIRE.

THOSE "GOONS" HAVE HAD A LIFE OF FIGHTING FOR SCRAPS...

...WHILE HAVING TO SUFFER THE ERRATIC RAGES OF THE JOKER OR THE RIDDLER...

...OR OUR OWN. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE WE BEATEN THESE PEOPLE WITH OUR OWN HANDS? THEY SERVE SOME TIME, THEY GO RIGHT BACK TO THOSE MONSTERS, THE HEISTS--

--AND PETTY ALLEYWAY ***ROBBERIES.***

BECAUSE IT'S ***ALL THEY KNOW.*** THEY NEVER HAD THE ***SKILLS*** TO FIGURE SOMETHING ELSE OUT.

UNTIL NOW.

I'VE ***TRAINED*** THEM, AND I'M TRAINING ***MORE.***

TO BE LIKE ***ME. ELITE CAT BURGLARS.***

NO MORE SMASH AND GRABS. NO MORE ARMED ROBBERY. NO MORE ***HENCHMEN.***

AND I'VE GIVEN THEM ***RULES:***

THEY'RE ONLY ALLOWED TO STEAL FROM THE ***WEALTHY*** OF THIS CITY.

NO SCORE IS WORTH YOUR LIFE, OR ANYONE ELSE'S. NO VIOLENCE. NO CONFRONTATIONS.

AND THEY HAVE TO DONATE 15 PERCENT OF THEIR ***GAINS*** TO GOTHAM CHARITIES.

THIS IS WHY THE STREETS ARE QUIET.

THIS IS WHY YOUR ***VILLAINS*** ARE FLOUNDERING.

AND IT'S GETTING BIG ENOUGH THAT I NEED YOU ALL TO DO SOMETHING FOR ME.

I NEED YOU TO LEAVE US ALONE.

THIS ISN'T A SOLUTION. YOU'VE JUST ***CHANGED THE CRIME.***

YES, BUT... THERE'S A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A ***BODEGA OWNER*** BEING SHOT FOR THE MONEY THEY NEED TO ***LIVE ON*** AND...

A MILLIONAIRE WHO WAKES UP TO FIND SOME ***JEWELS*** MISSING.

SHE'S RIGHT. IT'S ACTUALLY ***WORKING.***

WE'VE ALL ***SEEN*** IT OUT THERE--

THIS IS ***PREPOSTEROUS!***

THESE CRIMINALS ARE JUST GOING TO BE ***BETTER TRAINED*** WHEN THEY ***SLINK BACK*** TO THEIR ***TWISTED MASTERS!***

BUT WHY WOULD THEY ***GO BACK?***

SHE'S GIVEN THEM ***INDEPENDENCE!***

I DON'T...THIS JUST DOESN'T ***SIT RIGHT*** WITH ME.

I THINK WE NEED TO SEE ***MORE,*** GET MORE ***DATA.***

MAYBE... MAYBE ***SELINA*** CAN SHOW US HOW SHE'S TRAINING THEM.

I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT I'M HEARING.

WE HAVE A ***MISSION.*** WE STOP ***CRIME.***

SO WE CAN SEE THE ***CHANGE.*** AND THEN WE CAN--

NO.

WE DON'T ***ALLOW*** SOME CRIMES SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY APPEAR ***MORE ACCEPTABLE*** THAN OTHERS.

WHAT IS THIS ***ABOUT,*** SELINA?

DO YOU EXPECT US TO LOOK AWAY WHEN WE SEE ONE OF ***YOUR*** CRIMINALS AT WORK?

DID YOU ***REALLY*** THINK I'D SIT BY AND ***WATCH*** A ***CRIME*** TAKE PLACE?

IF YOU ATTACK MY ***PEOPLE,*** ALL YOU'RE DOING IS ***INCREASING*** THE KINDS OF CRIMES YOU'RE SO DESPERATE TO ***STOP:***

THE ***VIOLENT ONES.*** WE'RE JUST ALLOWING ***THE RICH*** TO BE ROBBED. THEY CAN ***AFFORD*** IT.

HELL, HALF OF THEM NEVER EVEN ***EARNED*** THEIR LUDICROUS WEALTH. THEY CAN GIVE SOME UP FOR--

MY PARENTS WERE "RICH"!

...THIS IS ***WRONG,*** SELINA.

TARGETING ONE SET OF PEOPLE IN PLACE OF ANOTHER DOESN'T ***SOLVE*** ANYTHING.

DO NOT ***YELL AT ME.*** BUT IF WE'RE ***FIGHTING*** IN FRONT OF THE ***KIDS...***

...YOU'RE CLEARLY FURIOUS BECAUSE YOU'VE WASTED YOUR ***FORTUNE*** AND ***YOUR*** BRAIN ON ***BAT-CARS*** AND ***PUNCHING PEOPLE,*** AND IT TOOK ***COMPASSION*** TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

WE NEVER GOT MARRIED BECAUSE GOTHAM *"NEEDED A BATMAN,"* AND YOU WERE ALL TOO HAPPY TO AGREE AND THROW YOURSELF INTO YOUR ***MISSION.***

GOTHAM DOESN'T NEED BATMAN, BRUCE. IT NEEDED ***ME.***

SHOULD WE HEAD TO THE ***CHURCH*** NOW?!

HA!

SHE'S NOT WRONG, **BRUCE.**

I CANNOT BELIEVE YOU. YOU WHO GIVES GIFTS **INSTEAD** OF TALKING--

ONLY **YOU** WOULD HATE GETTING **EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED.**

NOT LIKE **THIS.**

BRUCE, WAIT--

THIS IS-- I'M NOT SURE WHAT TO **MAKE** OF IT, SELINA.

YOU AND BRUCE...I DON'T KNOW IF THE TWO OF YOU WILL BE ABLE TO WORK **THROUGH** THIS.

IT WAS NEVER JUST THE **TWO** OF US. IT WAS ME, HIM, AND HIS **MISSION.**

AND I'VE BEEN PLAYING THE FIELD.

I HAVE MY **OWN** MISSION.

WOW, I... I REALLY DON'T LIKE IT WHEN MOM AND DAD FIGHT.

SHE'S NOT **MY** MOTHER.

I DON'T **TAKE** LESSONS...

...FROM **CRIMINALS.**

BATMAN!

COME ***ON!*** WHAT'S THE POINT OF WALKING ***OUT*** INSTEAD OF--

INSTEAD OF ***WHAT,*** ROBIN?

TAK

REASONING WITH ALL OF YOU?

VROOO

EVERYONE IN THAT ROOM IS A ***VICTIM*** OF CRIME.

I TOOK ALL OF YOU IN, HELPED YOU MOVE ***PAST*** THAT, TO ***HELP.***

AND NOW YOU ALL WANT TO DECIDE WHO GETS TO ***BE*** A VICTIM?

THERE'S NOTHING TO ***DEBATE.***

VROOOOM

@#$%. I MEANT TO TEXT YOU THAT I WASN'T TRAINING TONIGHT. I DON'T HAVE IT IN ME.

THAT'S FINE, DARIO. I'M TAKING A SHOWER AND GOING TO BED.

YOU OKAY?

ARE YOU?

...POINT TAKEN.

B

Call Text

creeak

DARIO, CAN WE PLEASE TALK TOMORROW OVER BRUNCH OR SOMETHING--

B

Call Text

HEY, SELINA.

NICE PLACE YOU'VE GOT--BUT YOU NEED A SECURITY GUARD WHO DOESN'T JUST ***MOPE ON THE COUCH.***

WUBSHHH

WHAT PART OF "LEAVE ME ALONE" DIDN'T YOU *UNDERSTAND?!*

YOU FOLLOWED ME? TO *MY* HOME?

GET OUT OF HERE.

NH! IT'S A ***NICE*** BUILDING. HOW'S THE ITALIAN PLACE DOWNSTAIRS?

HN!

BRUCE REALLY RATTLED YOU BACK THERE, DIDN'T HE?

KRAK

IT'S DEFINITELY ***DISTRACTING*** YOU.

THERE'S ***NO WAY*** I WOULD'VE BEEN ABLE TO FOLLOW YOU BEFORE THAT MEETING.

SPEAKING OF *DISTRACTED.*

OOOO, YOU'VE GOT *KILLER* FRIENDS HIDDEN *EVERYWHERE! EIKO,* YEAH? I DON'T THINK BATMAN APPROVES OF THE *YAKUZA.*

IF HE DIDN'T LIKE YOUR PLAN BEFORE...

HN!

...HE'S *REALLY* NOT GOING TO LIKE IT *NOW.*

UNH!

WHACK

I FINISHED MOPING.

KRAK

HN!

GET THE *HELL...*

...OUT OF MY *HOUSE,* JASON.

YOU'RE GOING TO NEED MORE THAN *THIS CREW,* SELINA...

...WHEN *HE* COMES.

YOU DON'T JUST NEED THE JUNIOR BATS TO STAY OUT OF YOUR *WAY...*

...YOU NEED THOSE OF US WHO *GET IT* TO PURR IN HIS EAR FOR YOU. YOU NEED HELP FROM THE *INSIDE.*

AND I *GET IT,* SELINA.

THE SAME WAY *EIKO* HERE GETS IT. AND *THIS* GUY...

DARIO. I *LIVE* HERE.

DON'T TALK TO THEM. I'VE GOT SOMEONE ELSE I WANT YOU TO SPEAK TO.

HER NAME IS *MARQUISE.* YOU'LL NEED TO GO THROUGH HER IF YOU WANT TO *HELP*--YOU CAN'T BE SEEN AROUND ME AGAIN IF THIS IS GOING TO WORK.

AND I DON'T THINK I NEED TO *SAY* THIS, BUT: NO KILLING. THE LAST THING WE NEED...

"...IS AN EVEN *ANGRIER BATMAN.*"

I'm losing control.

And control is all I ever ***had.*** Over my ***mind,*** my ***body...***

...my ***city.*** Gotham has always been ***unlawful.*** It's why I ***exist,*** to ***correct*** that.

And the people who ***followed*** me into this life...

...maybe I've been ***blinded*** by my affection for them. Thinking that they all ***shared*** my mission.

They all put ***on*** their costumes, pretend to be "Nightwing" or "Robin"...

I'm not pretending.

This is who I am:

Justice.

And I'll do what I need to do.

SO. YOU *LIVE.*

WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU THINK *OTHERWISE...*

...COMMISSIONER MONTOYA?

FIGURED I'D DUST OFF THIS GIANT *TEXT NOTIFICATION* SINCE NOBODY'S SEEN YOU FOR A *WHILE.*

AND FUNNY *THAT...*

...YOU DISAPPEAR AND *CRIME* GOES DOWN.

MAKES YOU *THINK.*

I DON'T REALLY *CARE* FOR YOU, BATMAN.

FINE. IT'S A *GROWING* AND *ENDLESS* LIST.

WHY AM I HERE?

THERE WAS A **BREAKOUT** FROM THE JAIL.

SELINA KYLE LED IT, FROM WHAT WE CAN TELL, BRINGING SOME DANGEROUS PEOPLE WITH HER.

YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE THEY COULD BE?

WHY WOULD I?

WELL, TO BE PERFECTLY BLUNT, RUMOR HAS IT YOU AND HER ARE...TIGHT.

LOOK, **JIM GORDON** SEEMED TOTALLY **CONTENT** MAKING YOUR DEAL A ONE-WAY STREET.

GIVING YOU INFORMATION WHILE HE SAT AND **WAITED** FOR YOU TO DELIVER GUYS IN COSTUMES.

BUT I ACTUALLY FEEL LIKE **DOING MY JOB,** SO IF YOU HAVE ANY DIRT ABOUT THE **JAILBREAK** THEN **GIVE IT TO ME.**

IT'S THE **LEAST** YOU CAN DO SINCE I'M NOT OUT **ARRESTING** YOU AND YOUR CREW ON SIGHT.

WE'RE OUT THERE **DOING WHAT WE DO** BECAUSE **YOU** LET GOTHAM **FESTER!**

ACTUALLY, NOT ONLY HAS CRIME HAS BEEN **DOWN** SINCE **YOU** DISAPPEARED, IT'S BEEN DOWN SINCE I BECAME--

STATS CAN BE **MANIPULATED.** THE **STREETS** TELL ME WHAT I NEED TO KNOW!

AND YOU **WANT** WHAT I KNOW, MONTOYA? YOU WANT **IN?** ON HOW **MY** CITY OPERATES?

PROVE YOURSELF.

"IF I'M THIS TO ALL, I'M THIS TO NONE.

"I'M KEPT CLOSE, BUT MY OPPOSITE SHOULD BE KEPT EVEN CLOSER."

IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE **BOTH** LOSING **FRIENDS,** BATMAN...

...SO THE **REAL QUESTION** IS:

DO YOU WANT A **NEW** ONE?

Okay, Roland. Easy does it. Easy...

CLK

Holy #$@%.

It **worked.**

You're **ready** for this, man.

You disabled the alarms, you made sure the family was out of **town.**

Everything **Catwoman** taught you. The **checklist.**

I promised you, Sally...

...our daughter would be **safe** when you were gone--taken **care** of.

#$@% wow.

We could live for **years** off of what's in the palm of my hand.

This is--

CRK

What was *that?!*

#$@%! Keep your cool, man.

That's number *one* on the checklist, you--

tnk

TNK

Damn!

Sloppy! Need to calm *down* and--

S-STOP!

D-DON'T YOU #@$€%#@ MOVE! OR I'LL--

--CALL THE COPS IF YOU MESS UP...

...MY REMAINING ELITE CLIENTELE.

FIGHT NIGHT

HN. BEEN A WHILE, FLANNIGAN.

"Flunky's" is where all the goons used to hang out, trade stories.

Gotham's themed villains would troll here looking for hireable hands.

FRIDAY NIGHT. PLACE IS USUALLY FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH SCUM.

DON'T PRETEND LIKE YOU DON'T KNOW...

...EVERYONE THINKS THEY HIT THE BIG TIME. LIKE THEY'RE INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS ALL OF A SUDDEN.

GOT RULES NOW. NO "PUBLIC FRATERNIZING," IF YOU BELIEVE IT.

ALL I GOT ARE GUYS LIKE SYD HERE, ALL AGED OUT OF LIFTIN' GIANT PENNIES FER TWO-FACE.

-HIC!- DAMN NEAR BROKE MY BACK...

Flunky's. The wharf. Gotham railyards.

Every haunt is cleared out.

FLUNKY'S

EST 1999

BEER

SHOT

PA

She did it.

I've been out since *dusk,* coming across *nothing.* No muggings, no violence...
No emergencies caused by the *wild cards* with outsized egos...
...enacted by their hired hands.
The crimes being committed now make no noise.
Silent thefts joining the ranks of the other quiet crimes: The embezzlements. The frauds.
Was Selina right?
Am I so dogmatic that I can't see her plan as a good thing?
If people are safer...
...isn't that--
Sirens. Two blocks away.
It's not *all* quiet.
PFA

--OFFICERS ARE ON THE 22nd FLOOR SHUTTING DOWN THE SCENE.

OKAY. I'M GOING TO GO TALK TO THE *NEIGHBORS* AS WELL, THEN--

TELL ME EVERYTHING.

#$@%!

POLICE

POLICE

F-F-FREEZE!

TRY IT.

EASE UP, OFFICER...

...'CAUSE THAT WON'T END WELL.

THIS MAN...

YOU *KNOW* HIM? GUY BROKE INTO A *CONDO* TWENTY FLOORS UP.

OWNED BY *HANNAH JIANG* OF *JIANG CHEMICALS.*

HER FAMILY WAS ON VACATION IN CENTRAL CITY BUT SHE COULDN'T JOIN THEM BECAUSE OF WORK...

His name...

...is Roland Garner.

Worked for *Freeze.* *Riddler.*

Spent some time in Blackgate.

A single father making bad choices.

Everyone's making ***bad choices.***

And now this man--this ***father--*** is dead.

Leaving an ***orphan.***

I'll fight you ***all*** if I have to.

The ***mission has been tainted:***

We ***stop crime.***

WE STOP CRIME.

Because we're ***Batman.***

TO BE CONTINUED IN *BATMAN* #137 NEXT WEEK!

DC

DAWN OF DC

A hard-boiled tale debuting in AUGUST

THE PENGUIN

REVENGE IS FOR THE BIRDS!

Written by
Eisner Award Winner
TOM KING

Art by
Eisner Award Nominee
RAFAEL DE LATORRE

Cover by
SCORPIO STEELE
STEFANO GAUDIANO

© & ™ DC.

Don't miss
***The Penguin* #0**
prelude one-shot!

FORGING THE FUTURE
ONE VILLAIN AT A TIME

DC NATION SPOTLIGHT ON

DAWN OF DC

BATMAN/CATWOMAN

THE GOTHAM WAR

© & ™ DC.

THE BAT AND THE CAT COLLIDE WITH THE SOUL OF THEIR CITY AT STAKE!

AUGUST

- *Batman/Catwoman: The Gotham War - Battle Lines #1*

SEPTEMBER

- *Batman #137*
- *Catwoman #57*
- *Batman/Catwoman: The Gotham War: Red Hood #1*

OCTOBER

- *Batman #138*
- *Catwoman #58*
- *Batman/Catwoman: The Gotham War: Red Hood #2*
- *Batman/Catwoman: The Gotham War: Scorched Earth #1*

DC COMICS MARIE JAVINS VP – Editor-in-Chief JIM LEE President, Publisher & Chief Creative Officer ANNE DePIES Senior VP & General Manager LARRY BERRY VP – Brand Design & Creative Services DON FALLETTI VP – Manufacturing & Production LAWRENCE GANEM VP – Editorial Programming & Talent Strategy ALISON GILL Senior VP – Manufacturing & Operations NICK J. NAPOLITANO VP – Publishing & Business Operations NANCY SPEARS VP – Sales & Marketing

BATMAN/CATWOMAN: THE GOTHAM WAR: BATTLE LINES 1. October, 2023. Published by DC Comics, 4000 Warner Blvd., Bldg. 700, 2nd Floor, Burbank, CA 91522. GST # is R125921072. Copyright © 2023 DC Comics. All Rights Reserved. All characters featured in this issue, the distinctive likenesses thereof, and related elements are trademarks of DC Comics. The stories, characters, and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. DC Comics does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork. For Advertising and Custom Publishing contact dccomicsadvertising@dccomics.com. For details on DC Comics Ratings, visit dc.com/ratings.

The Last Kryptonian-DCP